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The Urban District of Skelmersdale



Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the year

1957



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SKELMERSDALE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1957

Chairman.....J. T. Latham

Vice-Chairman.....R. J. Humphries

Chairman of the Health Committee.....W. J. Fenney

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T. MOSTON

A. H. MORGAN

W. MIDDLEHURST

J. SHARROCK

J. W. SHUFFLEBOTHAM

J. T. WAREING

Medical Officer of Health :

J. GORDON HAIDWOOD, M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
(Part-time)

(Divisional Medical Officer, Lancashire County Council)

Public Health Inspector : ALBERT LAVELLE,
A.P.H.I., A.R.S.H., Cert, I., Hsg.

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
HEALTH COMMITTEE

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the health of the district during 1957.

The general health has remained good and the incidence of infectious disease has been minimal. Only 25 cases were notified of which 15 were measles.

The birth rate for the year was 12.3 per 1,000 population, while the death rate was 15.2 per population. There was only 1 death of an infant under one year, giving the infant mortality rate of 13 per 1,000 live births. There were no maternal deaths. These figures compare favourably with those for England and Wales and indicate a high standard of health in Skelmersdale.

Housing conditions continue to improve. Progress was made during the year in demolition of slum property. The slum clearance programme and the Housing Repairs and Rents Acts have increased the duties of the Public Health Inspector considerably. A high standard of work has, however, been maintained and 1,792 inspection visits were made to dwelling houses under the Public Health and Housing Acts, in addition to numerous visits to other types of premises.

In conclusion, I would thank the Members of the Health Committee for their interest and the staff for their ready co-operation at all times.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. G. HAILWOOD.

July, 1958.

Area of the Districts—1,942 acres.

Resident Population (Registrar General's estimate at mid-1957) 6,340

Number of inhabited houses according to Rate Books at end of 1957: 2,077.

Rateable Value: £36,821.

Sum represented by a penny rate—£154.

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1957.

Live Births					Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	43	34	77
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	1	—	1

Crude birth rate per 1,000 estimated population—12.3

Adjusted birth rate per 1,000 estimated population—12.3

Still Births

Legitimate	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	1	—	1

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births—49.

Deaths

Crude death rate per 1,000 estimated population—12.0

Adjusted death rate per 1,000 estimated population—15.2.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes

Puerperal and Post-abortive Sepsis	...	...	...	...	—
Other maternal causes	...	...	...	...	—

Deaths of Infants under one year of age.

All infants per 1,000 live births	1
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ...	1
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	—
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	11
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	—
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	—
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	—

BIRTHS

There were 78 births registered in the Urban District during the year, of which 44 were male and 34 female, and including 1 illegitimate birth which was male. The adjusted birth rate per 1,000 population (mid-1957) (comparability factor 1.00) was 12.3 compared with 16.5 in 1956.

DEATHS

The total number of deaths registered in the Urban District, during the year, as 76, of this number, 40 were male and 36 female. This was an increase of 13 on the figure for 1956. The crude death rate for the year was 12.0 per 1,000 population. The adjusted death rate (comparability factor 1.27) was 15.2 per 1,000 population compared with 12.6 in 1956.

INFANT MORTALITY

There were no deaths during the year due to Zymotic or Epidemic diseases. There was 1 death of an infant under one year, an infantile mortality rate of 13 per 1,000 live births.

MATERNAL MORTALITY

The Maternal Mortality Rate per 1,000 births (live and still) was nil. The figure for England and Wales was 0.47. No maternal deaths occurred in the District during the year.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE SKELMERSDALE URBAN DISTRICT, 1957

Causes of Death.								Male	Female
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Syphilitic Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Meningococcal Infections	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other ineffectve or parasitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Cancer	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	4
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	2
Vascular lesions or nervous system	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	6
Heart diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14	14
Other Circulatory diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	—
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	—
Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Hyperplasia or prostate	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Pregnancy, childbirth abortion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Congenital malformations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	4
Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
All other accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
Homicide and Operations of War	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
TOTALS								40	36

Deaths of Infants under 1 year:

				M.	F.		
Legitimate	...	...	...	1	—		
Illegitimate	...	...	...	—	—	1	—

Still Births:

Legitimate	...	...	...	2	1		
Illegitimate	...	...	...	1	—	3	1

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICE FOR THE AREA

Laboratory Facilities

Pathological specimens of a simple nature, throat swabs etc., are sent for examination at the E.M.S. Pathological Laboratory at the Ormskirk County Hospital. All other specimens are sent to the City Laboratories, Liverpool.

Ambulance Facilities

Ambulance Services are provided by the County Council under the National Health Service Act, 1946.

Clinics and Treatment Centres

AA Congregational Schoolroom in Witham Road, is utilised every Wednesday morning as a Child Welfare Centre and Minor Ailments Clinic, under the direction of Dr. J. Willins and Nurse Bodley, of the Lancashire County Council. An Immunisation Clinic is held on the fourth Wednesday afternoon in each month at 2-15 on the same premises by Dr. Willins.

HOSPITALS

There are no hospitals in the town.

The Ormskirk County Hospital and the Wigan Hospitals provide ample accomodation for all patients from Skelmersdale.

Infectious cases are admitted to the New Hall Isolation Hospital, Scarisbrick.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES

Water Supply

The township is supplied with water by the Southport and District Water Board.

Water is pumped through two boreholes some 750 deep at Scarth Hill into the adjoining water tower from which it gravitates through a 7 inch main to the district. This pumping station formerly belonged to the Council who sold it to the Southport and District Water Board in 1907. The district mains are still owned by the Council. It is very likely that many of these older mains will be badly corroded owing

to the constantly acid nature of the water and the large amount of free carbon dioxide it carries. The water supply is, however, of the highest standard of organic and bacterial purity.

Due to the Council's post-war building programme and the modernisation of existing old houses, the pressure in the higher parts of the town is poor at certain periods of the week. The Council met the Southport and District Water Board in November to consider the question of an improvement in the supply, and certain improvements are to be carried out.

Sewage Disposal

The district is sewered on the partly separate system. The sewage from approximately 1,700 houses is discharged by gravity through a 24 inch outfall sewer at the Council's Berry Street Disposal Works, and that from approximately 350 houses, by a 15 inch outfall sewer at the Pennyland Works.

Sewage from a small number of houses in the Stormy Area is discharged into settling tanks at the rear of Summer Street.

The sewage at Berry Street is treated by settlement and land irrigation, and is in urgent need of modernisation.

The sewage at Pennyland is treated by sedimentation and filtration and considerable improvement has been made in the quality of the effluent.

Closet Accomodation

Privy Middens—15. Number of closets attached to these middens—26.

Number of pail closets—44.

Number of dry ashpits (excluding middens)—Nil.

Number of moveable ashbins—2,051.

Number of houses on water carriages system—2,007.

Number of water closets (including schools etc.) 2,059.

HOUSING

Number of New Houses erected during the Year :

(i) By the Local Authority	...	...	...	...	41
(ii) By other Local Authorities	...	...	...	...	—
(iii) By other bodies or persons	...	...	...	...	6

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the Year:

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected formally or informally for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	701
--	-----	-----	-----

	(b)	Number of inspections, formal or informal made for the purpose	1792
(2)		Dwelling houses unfit for human habitation and not capable at reasonable expense of being rendered fit:	
	(a)	Number found during the year	42
	(b)	Number (or estimated number) at end of year ...	250
(2)		Number of dwelling houses found during the year to be not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation, but capable of being rendered fit	246

2. Clearance Areas (Housing Act 1936 and Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954).

(1)	Number of dwelling houses demolished during the year.	
	(a) Unfit houses	NIL.
	(b) Other Houses	NIL.
(2)	Number of persons displaced	NIL.

3. Houses not included in Clearance Areas:

(1)		No. of	
		Houses	Persons Displaced
(a)	Housing Act, 1936 :—		
	(i) Demolished as a result of formal or informal procedure (Section 11).	16	10
	(ii) Closed in pursuance of an undertaking given by owners under Section 11 and still in force.	—	—
	(iii) Parts of building closed (Section 12)	—	—
(b)	Housing Act, 1949 :—		
	(i) Closed as a result of closing orders under Sections 3 (1) and 3 (2)	—	—
(c)	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953 :—		
	(i) Closed as a result of closing orders under Sections 10 (1) and 11 (2).	2	—

(2) Repairs during the year :—

(a) Unfit houses rendered fit and houses in

	periodas a result of informal action by the Local Authority under the Housing or Public Health Acts	...	...	...	...	229
(b)	Public Health Acts—action after service of formal notice—Houses in which defects were remedied:					
	(i) By Owners	...	...	...	...	26
	(ii) By Local Authority in default of Owners	...	...	...	...	—
(c)	Housing Act 1936—action after service of formal notice (Sections 9, 10, 11 & 16), Houses made fit					
	(i) By Owners	...	...	...	...	—
	(ii) By Local Authority in default of Owners	...	...	...	...	—
(d)	Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954:—Houses reconstructed, enlarged or improved and Demolition Orders revoked (Section 5)	...	...	...	...	—
4.	Unfit Houses in temporary use (Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954).					
(1)	Number of houses at end of year retained for temporary accommodation and approved for grant under Section 7	...	...	...	...	—
(2)	Number of separate dwellings contained in (1) above	...	...	...	...	—
(3)	Number of houses at end of year licensed for temporary occupation (Section 6)	...	...	...	...	—
5.	Housing Act, 1949—Improvement Grants etc :—					
	Action during the year :—	...	...	...	...	NIL.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE STATISTICS

	Smallpox	Enteric Fever	Scarlet Fever	Measles	Diphtheria	Puerperal Pyrexia	Erysipelas	Whooping Cough	Pneumonia	Para-typhoid Fever	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Acute Poliomyelitis	Dysentery
Cases	...	—	—	15	—	—	1	—	2	—	—	2	—
Deaths	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1957

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES	TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED													Hospital		
	Total Cases at all Ages	YEARS												Total Deaths	Total Cases removed to Hospital	Deaths in Hospital of persons belonging to district
		Under 1 year	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 & upwards			
SMALLPOX ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
SCARLET FEVER ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
DIPHTHERIA ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ENTERIC FEVER ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
PARA-TYPHOID FEVER	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
PUERPERAL PYREXIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ERYSIPELAS ...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
POLIOMYELITIS ...	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
ACUTE PNEUMONIA ...	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION	2	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—
MEASLES ...	15	1	2	3	1	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
WHOOPIING COUGH ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
FOOD POISONING ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
DYSENTERY ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ANTHRAX ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
OPHTHALMIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NEONATORUM PULMONARY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TUBERCULOSIS	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—
NON-PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—
TOTALS ...	25	1	1	2	3	1	10	1	—	2	2	2	—	1	5	—

The following table shows the number, monthly distribution and nature of cases of Infectious Diseases coming under the notice of the Medical Officer of Health during 1957.

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Totals	Removed to Hospital
ANTHRAX	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
SMALLPOX	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
SCARLET FEVER	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
DIPHTHERIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ENTERIC FEVER	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
PARA-TYPHOID FEVER	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	2	—
ACUTE PNEUMONIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
PUERPERAL PYREXIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MENINGOCOCCAL INFECTION	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	2	2
MALARIA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
DYSENTERY	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
MEASLES	—	1	8	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	—
WHOOPING COUGH	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ERYSIPELAS	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
OPHTHALMIA														
NEONATORUM	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
ACUTE POLIOMYELITIS ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	2	—
TOTALS	1	1	8	6	—	—	—	1	4	—	1	—	22	2

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The number of children who have completed a full course of Immunisation during the year ending 31st December, 1957, is as follows :—

Children between the ages 0-4 years—94, and children between the ages 5-15—12, making a total of 106.

There has been no incidence or mortality from Diphtheria during the past ten years.

SCARLET FEVER

TABLE SHOWING INCIDENCE AND MORTALITY FROM SCARLET FEVER, 1948-1957

[illegible]

TUBERCULOSIS

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1957

Age Periods			New Cases				Deaths			
			Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
			M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—10	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10—15	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—20	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20—25	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35	...	...	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
35—45	...	...	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
45—55	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	...	...	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
			1		1		—		—	

Dispensary and sanatorium treatment for Tuberculosis is administered by the appropriate department for the Lancashire County Council.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR 1957

The provision of mains water supply to an isolated farmstead, following protracted negotiations with both the owner and the tenant, brought mains water to the last remaining premises in the area without such supply. This is an ideal at which every local authority aims, water being one of the prime necessities of life. There remains, however, the sustaining of an adequate mains supply to all parts of the area and the Council are resolved to secure satisfactory pressure at all points.

HOUSING

(a) Improvement.

No grants have yet been made under the Housing Act.

Many sitting tenants have purchased their houses as a result of the proposed rent increases under the Rent Act, 1957 and have proceeded with improving the property without a grant.

(b) Repairs.

A few houses have been repaired under the Rent Act, 1957, but the full effect of the Act has yet to be seen and it is expected that 1958 will see a considerable amount of repair work carried out in the area.

(c) Slum Clearance.

An area of 24 houses was submitted to the Ministry of Housing & Local Government in December for confirmation of a clearance order made by the Council.

16 individual unfit houses were demolished during the year.

FOOD

(a) Premises.

Occupiers are maintaining their premises in satisfactory condition. 2 grocery and 1 greengrocery shops were refitted during the year.

One bakehouse occupier completely rendered the internal walls of his bakery which had previously been white-washed.

One bakehouse was closed down when the company decided that the cost of bringing the premises up to the standard required by the Hygiene Regulations was not justified.

The four remaining bakehouses are now in a satisfactory condition.

(b) Unsound Food.

The following articles, unfit for human consumption, have been surrendered by food retailers :—

Food.	Weight
Boiled Ham	45 lbs.
Ox Tongue	6 lbs.
Tinned Beef	9½ lbs.
Tinned Pork	7 ozs.
Tinned Chicken	4 lbs.
Tinned Vegetables	8 lbs.
Tinned Fruit	25 lbs.
Tinned Syrup	2 lbs.
Tinned Milk	1 lb.

(c) Adulteration of Food.

A total of 35 samples was obtained, consisting of 20 samples of milk (one of which was a sample of Channel Islands Milk), and 15 others comprising :—

British Ruby Wine	1
Yeast Extract	1
Yeast Tablets	2
Vitamin Capsule	1
Asprin Tablets	4
Shredded Suet	1
Butter	1
Margarine	1
Lard	1
Fruit Juice	1
Arrowroot Biscuit	1

The samples were submitted to the County Analyst for analysis and he reports that all were “genuine”) with the exception of the sample of arrowroot biscuit, which was referred back to the local authority in which the manufacturer’s premises were situated.

The premises were inspected and a satisfactory report submitted.

DAIRIES

There is only one registered dairy, and this has been inspected and maintained in a satisfactory condition.

Milk Retailers Licences.

The following Licences were issued during the year :—

Tuberculin Tested	...	...	...	4
Pasteurised	...	...	...	7
Sterilised	...	...	...	25

Milk Sampling

The following samples were submitted for examination :—

GRADE	TEST	SAMPLES	SATISFACTORY
T.T. Raw	T.B.	4	4

ICE CREAM

There are 19 premises registered for the sale of ice-cream. There are no manufacturers.

All retailers maintained their premises in a satisfactory condition during the year, and each have satisfactory washing facilities, including a constant supply of hot water.

6 Ice Lollies were submitted for analysis and all were reported satisfactory.

RODENT CONTROL

Routine inspections for the destruction of rats and mice were carried out, and treatment done by the part-time Rodent Operator. Private premises were treated free of cost, and a charge made for business premises, using "Warfarin." No major infestations were discovered.

Maintenance treatment for the destruction of rats in sewers were carried out in March and September, using alternatively the poisons Zinc Phosphide and Arsenic. There is no serious re-infestation of the sewers.

Attention was paid to the control of infestation at the Council's Sewage Works and Refuse Tip.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

This service is carried out under the supervision of the Public Health Inspector. A Karrier Diesel-driven 10 cubic yard freighter is used for the purpose.

Dustbins and pail closets are emptied weekly and privy middens as often as possible. 10 middens were abolished during 1957 and these served 14 houses.

15 middens affecting 26 houses remain in the outlying areas. Of these, 14 houses are scheduled for demolition and it is hoped to eliminate the other 12 during 1958.

SALVAGE

Waste paper is collected and placed in sacks on the back of the freighter.

27 tons 10 cwts, were sold during the year, the value being £192, and increase of £52 on the previous year.

It is estimated that if no waste paper has been salvaged, the paper deposited in the tip would have occupied more than 500 cub. yds., of tipping space. In addition, there would have been the increased danger of tip fires.

SHOPS

There are 106 shops on the register, and 203 visits were made during the year.

Duties under the Shops Act, 1950, relating to the employment of young persons, washing facilities etc., were carried out on behalf of the County Council.

SCHOOLS

The dinner service rooms and sanitary accommodation at each of the four schools have been inspected.

Defects found in relation to the rooms used for the service of meals were notified to the Education Authority and improvements have been carried out or are in hand.

FACTORIES

Routine visits have been made to the factories in the district and any defects found, remedied without the service of satisfactory notices.

ATMOSPHERE POLLUTION

A number of visits have been made to 5 factories with boiler houses in the district. In 5 instances it was necessary to bring the attention of the management to a smoke nuisance, and the emission of smoke has been considerably reduced

Summary of the work of the Public Health Inspector

Number of dwelling houses inspected under								
Public Health and Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	701
Number of inspections made for above purposes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1792
Visits to factories and work places	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	41
Visits to food premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	128
Visits to infectious diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Visits to schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Visits to licensed premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	29
Visits to shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	203
Visits to hawkers' vehicles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
Visits re rodent control	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	46
Visits re bacteriological samples of milk	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Number of preliminary notices served	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	321
Number of preliminary notices compiled with	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	309
Number of statutory notices served	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	29
Number of statutory notices compiled with	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26

